

Agency 315

**Department of Services for the Blind****Recommendation Summary**

Dollars in Thousands

	Annual FTEs	General Fund State	Other Funds	Total Funds
<b>2009-11 Expenditure Authority</b>	75.0	4,894	20,011	24,905
<b>Total Maintenance Level</b>	75.0	5,109	21,375	26,484
Difference		215	1,364	1,579
Percent Change from Current Biennium	0.0%	4.4%	6.8%	6.3%
<b>Performance Changes</b>				
Deaf-Blind Service Center Contract		(480)		(480)
Independent Living Overmatch		(26)		(26)
Suspend Plan 1 Uniform COLA #		(33)	(145)	(178)
State Data Center Rate Increase		33	3	36
<b>Subtotal</b>		(506)	(142)	(648)
<b>Total Proposed Budget</b>	75.0	4,603	21,233	25,836
Difference		(291)	1,222	931
Percent Change from Current Biennium	0.0%	(5.9)%	6.1%	3.7%
<b>Total Proposed Budget by Activity</b>				
Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for the Blind	60.0	3,919	15,299	19,218
Community Independent Living and Child and Family Programs	2.3	224	2,210	2,434
Department of Services for the Blind Administration	12.7	460	3,644	4,104
Telephonic Reading Services for the Blind			80	80
Deaf-Blind Service Center				
<b>Total Proposed Budget</b>	75.0	4,603	21,233	25,836

**PERFORMANCE LEVEL CHANGE DESCRIPTIONS****Deaf-Blind Service Center Contract**

Beginning in Fiscal Year 2012, the Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing will take over the contract with the Deaf-Blind Service Center to provide accessibility, security, and independence with daily life activities for deaf-blind individuals in Washington State.

**Independent Living Overmatch**

The Department will reduce Independent Living Program outreach activities.

**ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS**

## **HUMAN SERVICES - OTHER**

### **ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services for the Blind**

The Vocational Rehabilitation Program enables individuals who are blind or visually impaired to become competitively employed by developing their skills, independence, and self-confidence. Through a federal Rehabilitation Services Administration grant, the Department of Services for the Blind provides comprehensive and individualized services to meet each participant's needs and to support each Individual Plan for Employment. Services include vocational counseling; post-secondary education; job readiness training; assistive technology devices, assessment and training; training in adaptive skills of blindness; educational transition services for teens and young adults; assistance with small business development; mental health counseling; transportation; assistance with job search, development, and placement; workplace accommodations; and employer follow-up.

The Washington State Business Enterprise Program (BEP) provides opportunities for qualified legally-blind adults to operate successful food service businesses in government buildings. Types of food service businesses include snack/gift shops, espresso stands, delis, and cafeterias. These opportunities are provided through the federal Randolph-Sheppard Act.

To be eligible for the BEP Training Program, a candidate must: be a legally-blind U.S. citizen; have an aptitude for business management; receive a referral from a Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) counselor; have practical skills; and meet legal criteria for operating a business supported by federal law. DSB provides required training to become a BEP licensee for operating and managing a food-service facility; the essential pieces of food service equipment and small wares for each BEP facility; assistance to the new operator in opening up the facility; and ongoing management assistance and guidance. Funding for this program is generated through vending machines in government buildings and overhead is provided through General Fund–State dollars.

#### **Community Independent Living and Child and Family Programs**

The Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) provides a continuum of support for blind and visually impaired residents of the state through an integrated services model. The Independent Living Program teaches recently blinded residents how to continue living in their homes after vision loss. Service providers visit individuals' homes to provide low-cost devices and instruction in blindness techniques, including how to care for self and home, walking with the use of a cane, and how to continue to read and write. While 96,000 people are potentially eligible for these services, the program currently serves 2,000 individuals, most of whom are age 70 and over.

Through the Independent Living Program, DSB provides consultation services to families of blind children, birth to age 13, and to the organizations that serve them, such as preschools and schools. The program provides support, networking, advice, and information to families, teachers, and others about training, educational programs, and resources unique to the developmental needs of blind children. Transitional services are provided to youth aged 14 to 21 in conjunction with the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services Program.

#### **Department of Services for the Blind Administration**

This activity provides administrative support and business management for the Department of Services for the Blind. Administrative functions include budgeting, accounting, federal grants management, personnel, facilities management, information technology, and the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind.

#### **Telephonic Reading Services for the Blind**

Telephonic Reading Services provides reading services to blind individuals through the use of phone lines. The service is operated by the National Federation of the Blind in Baltimore, Maryland, and is mandated by RCW 74.18.045.

### **Deaf-Blind Service Center**

The funding designated for the Deaf-Blind Service Center (DBSC) is administered by the Department of Services for the Blind. The DBSC facilitates the effective access of deaf-blind individuals and their families to programs and services that meet their independent living needs. The DSBC offers a single, central entry point in the greater Puget Sound area, allowing clients to locate and receive a variety of personal assistance services, advocacy, and information and referral to appropriate agencies and available services.